

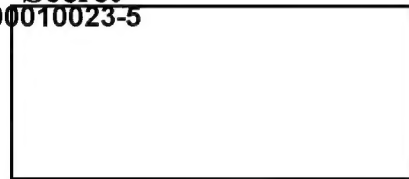


National
Foreign
Assessment
Center

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Africa Review

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State Department review completed

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AFRICA REVIEW
SUPPLEMENT

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Angola: Relations With Western Europe

The West Europeans in recent months have encouraged and welcomed Angolan overtures for diplomatic ties and economic assistance. The Angolans, who launched their drive for better relations with the West early in the summer, have evidently decided that their economic needs require giving high priority to such links.

Many West European officials are gratified by the Angolan overtures because they hope that by providing economic support and technical assistance the West will eventually greatly reduce Soviet and Cuban influence in Angola. The West Europeans also have their own economic and commercial reasons for seeking better ties with mineral-rich Angola.

The West Europeans are still uncertain about the Angolan Government's intentions toward them and are skeptical of the government's ability to administer the country's economy effectively and to withstand the political and military challenges of insurgent groups. The West Europeans hope their assistance will contribute to Angola's economic reconstruction and development and to political moderation in Angola and throughout southern Africa.

Portugal

Portugal's ties with its former colony are in many ways the most complex. While many Portuguese who fled Angola after 1974 remain hostile to the revolution there, Portuguese President Eanes hopes that a reconciliation with Angola will serve Portugal's commercial interest and enhance its status as a bridge both to Angola and to another former colony, Mozambique.

At the same time, the Portuguese want to align their policy toward Angola with that of other Western countries, especially the US. They have been eager to learn about US conditions for establishing formal relations with Angola. Several Portuguese officials argue that Angolan

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President Neto wants to pursue genuine nonalignment but is restrained by the Soviets and Cubans on whom he depends for internal security.

About 30,000 Portuguese remain in Angola, and this number should increase with the return of some refugees now in Portugal. In addition, some Portuguese technicians are on temporary tours of service in Angola. Eanes wants this sort of cooperation, as well as trade, to grow. At his meeting with Neto in June he won agreement for a general cooperation accord between the two countries to emphasize further Portugal's special role in Angola.

Belgium and France

Belgian and French policies toward Angola reflect divergent approaches to southern African problems. Belgium--with important interests in diamond and copper mines in Angola and neighboring Zaire as well as in the Benguela railroad--has sought a reconciliation between Angola and Zaire that would curtail the activities of rebels each shelters from the other. Similarly, to protect their economic enterprises, the Belgians have favored a resolution of the Shaba conflict in Zaire that would allow efficient administration of the region's economy regardless of who is in control politically.

These policies have made Belgian officials welcome in Angola. Last month Belgian Foreign Minister Simonet visited Angola for extensive talks on economic cooperation--especially in Angolan mining and oil development, in enlarging the port of Lobito, and in technical training and irrigation projects. Simonet also encouraged Angola to build closer relations with the European Community by participating in the Lome Convention, a trade and aid agreement linking the EC to over 50 developing nations.

French officials in contrast have stressed the Soviet and Cuban threat to Western interests in Africa, and they have defended Zairian President Mobutu against what they perceive to be a Cuban- and Angolan-supported threat from Katangan rebels based in Angola. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the Neto government until lately has

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kept France at arm's length. Angolan officials have charged that France is in league with "imperialist and racist forces" in Africa.

The French, however, have a strong interest in Angolan oil, and in the wake of Angola's rapprochement with some other Western countries, Paris has reconsidered its policy toward the Angolan Government. Angola and France have now agreed to raise their diplomatic relations to ambassadorial level.

Other Western Links

The West Europeans believe an Angolan tie to the European Community through the Lome Convention would be especially effective in drawing the Angolans away from Soviet influence. In June, Neto asked the EC to send its Commissioner for Aid and Development, Claude Cheysson, to Luanda to discuss Angolan accession to the Lome Convention. After his visit, Cheysson said he believes Angola is attracted to ties with the EC partly because the EC does not put political conditions on aid. The EC has granted Angola observer status at talks now under way on renegotiation of the Lome Convention.

The Community also invited the Angolan Minister of Industry to Brussels in mid-October for talks on Angola's foreign investment policy and on cooperation in energy development.

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[redacted] The EC now wants to help finance reconstruction of the Benguela railroad, and will send a delegation to Luanda in November for discussions on fisheries cooperation.

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West Germany

Among the EC countries, only West Germany has no formal links with Angola. Angolan officials maintain that Angola will not establish relations with West Germany because Angola is concerned about the West German company OTRAG and its rocket testing in Zaire.

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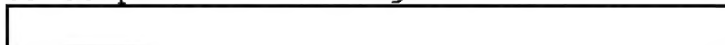
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Among other West Europeans, the Italians have been especially successful in trade negotiations with the Angolans. British officials note Angolan interest in commercial ties with the UK and have recently named an ambassador to Luanda. Swedish and Dutch officials held talks with the Angolans this spring, and Spain has concluded a fishing agreement with Angola. Norway also wants to establish diplomatic relations and has offered to cooperate with Angola on fisheries development.



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